

St Edward's Catholic Primary School

URN: 108012

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Leeds

25 March 2026 – 26 March 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education RE

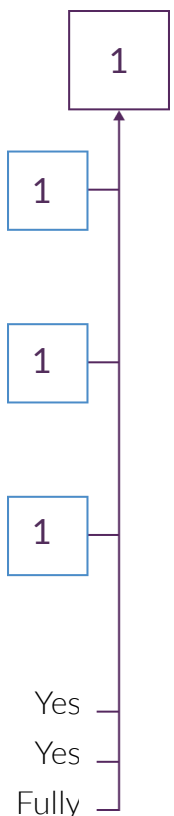
Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



What the school does well

- St Edward's Catholic Primary School lives and breathes its Catholic identity and mission throughout all of its daily activities, inspired by the dedicated leadership, passion and expertise of the outstanding headteacher.
- Every member of this strong community is fully committed to the school's mission statement - 'Through God's Grace we Grow and Learn'.
- Pupils are living out their faith in action, through their knowledge of the virtues and Catholic social teaching; they are prepared very well to leave the school as persons of good character who can contribute positively to their community and beyond.
- Standards in religious education are extremely high: pupils demonstrate a depth of religious understanding that they are confident in articulating.
- Pupils' confident and creative leadership of ministry, and their active and conscious participation in prayer and liturgy, are notable strengths of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Revisit the policy for prayer and liturgy, to include a revised progression of pupils' skills in planning and leading collective worship.
- Ensure the successful implementation of the new Religious Education Directory curriculum in Key Stage 2, with content adapted to suit the capabilities of pupils.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



Pupils have full understanding of the school's mission - 'Through God's Grace we grow and learn'. They have taken on board fully the Catholic identity of the school as they strive to 'come closer to God', the phrase most frequently heard when they refer to their various activities that promote the Catholic life and mission. They know that all members of the school are unique creations, made in the image and likeness of God, and therefore worthy of respect and care. Pupils willingly take on roles within school that carry defined responsibilities, for example Mini Vinnies, Eco Warriors, play leaders, sports leaders and School Council. They take these responsibilities seriously and understand that they are part of the commitment to following the teachings of Jesus, and ways of putting their faith into action. This results in substantial involvement in numerous charitable activities: they enjoy the entrepreneurial nature of the 'apprentice' and the Lenten activities that raise funds for others, and active service, for example to the elderly parishioners at Christmas. All of their actions are underpinned by a deep understanding of the virtues and the principles of Catholic social teaching; they are adept at articulating the theology that drives their response. They hold the chaplaincy provision in high regard, and willingly take part in voluntary opportunities for prayer, such as the rosary, or weekly prayer groups. Older pupils take pleasure in nurturing the prayer life of younger pupils.

The school's mission and vision statements have significant impact on all in the community, rooted in the gospel and brought to life throughout each day. The school provides an emphasis on character education, and staff are fully committed to developing the Catholic virtues. These have been embedded in the mindset of staff and pupils alike, with each linked

to areas of the curriculum. These are so well understood that pupils know their own individual strengths in flourishing in virtue, and those that they want to improve, aided by the provision of their 'Virtue passports'. There is a strong sense of community, supportive and joyful, seen in the quality of relationships and the culture of welcome. The physical environment truly reflects the Catholic identity of the school. Spiritual and moral development are prioritised, with extensive opportunities for pupils and staff, and for the involvement of families. Examples of these are the themed weeks, focussed on 'Positive Psychology' and 'Hope' for example, and the opportunity to contribute to almsgiving through the local foodbank collection and 'Tins on Tuesday.' Chaplaincy provision is exceptional, marked by retreats for pupils and staff, voluntary events and the 'Friday Faith Formation' development.

Leaders and governors give the highest priority to the Catholic life and mission. Engagement with the diocese has been enthusiastic and generous for many years. Parish links are well-developed, regarded highly by the parents and the parish priest.. The vast majority of parents recognise the value that the priority and time given to developing the Catholic life contributes to their children's character development, so that they can leave ready to make a positive contribution to society. The school's commitment to Catholic social teaching can be seen in the way in which it gives multiple opportunities for pupils to recognise and implement these principles. The whole of the taught curriculum is positively influenced by the Catholic ethos. Governors are fastidious, eager to support and challenge, and thorough in carrying out their responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation. Consequently, self evaluation is comprehensive and accurate. Pupils too are eager to contribute ideas for improvements. Professional development is very effective, including for those new to Catholic education.

Religious education

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

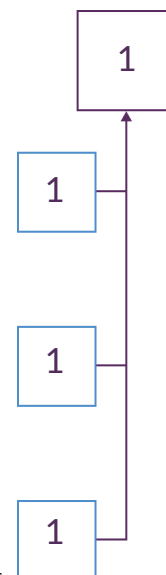
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education is exceptional. They speak with clear confidence using subject-specific vocabulary and discussing religious concepts at a deep level. They are religiously literate, and aware from their learning of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. They can reflect spiritually and theologically about what they have learnt, and can relate this to their own lives. They show notable independence and sustained concentration in lessons, genuinely interested in the subject, and thus fully engaged. They love to answer questions and engage in discussions with each other. Their behaviour is exemplary. Knowledge of scripture is extensive, and the ability to access passages from the Bible is developed at an early stage. Their work is of very high quality, beautifully presented, and they are very proud of it, relishing opportunities to share what they have done and to creatively represent their learning. "It's nice to have the freedom to choose what to do," as one pupil stated. They understand how well they are learning and how to improve.

Teachers show deep commitment to the value of religious education and high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Planning is thorough: in the best examples, learning objectives are ambitious and well matched to the tasks given to pupils. There is a consistent emphasis on a variety of approaches to learning to encourage and engage pupils. This ensures that pupils gain many opportunities to record their learning in writing, but also the chance to use art, music, poetry and drama as part of their work. Assessment of pupils' understanding is securely developed, particularly through end-of-topic quizzes. Feedback from teachers is

regular, through the use of the 'cloud' symbol to denote good work, and the 'brick' symbol to provide further challenge, although not always consistently applied in all classes. High levels of motivation come from celebration of effort and achievement, seen in the Virtue passports, and the weekly celebration assembly - 'the highlight of my week' as one parent stated. Teaching has a profound impact on moral and spiritual development, through the linking of biblical stories, virtues and Catholic social teaching. Purposeful reflection is a feature of every lesson. Pupils are given extensive opportunities to present their learning using a wide variety of ways, and relish being able to make independent creative choices.

The curriculum is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012* and the *Religious Education Directory 2023*. It is imaginatively enhanced, such as through extra focus weeks: Enrichment activities to augment the curriculum are well-chosen, including visits to Leeds Cathedral, York, Ampleforth, and Fountains Abbey for example. Religious education has been given the highest priority in terms of timetable, resourcing and focus. Continuing professional development for staff has been regular and effective. The headteacher is also the subject leader. Her commitment to its importance is without question. She is superbly organised, and meticulous about every aspect of the development of the subject so that pupils experience the very best religious understanding. Her knowledge and expertise are recognised beyond the school, with St Edward's religious education programme and outcomes held in high regard by colleagues elsewhere. The requirements for the new religious education curriculum have been implemented in Early Years and Key Stage 1, and the school is preparing for the next phase of implementation throughout Key Stage 2 from September. The headteacher's and governors' self-evaluation is forensic and searching, with both the headteacher and religious education link governor involved in regular focussed activity.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

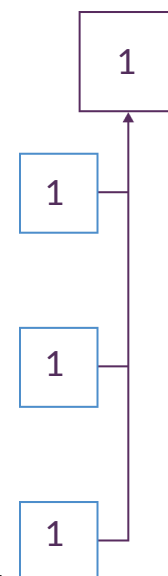
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



The full, active and conscious participation in experiences of prayer and liturgy is embedded in pupils. Their prayerful response to collective worship can be seen in how they hold periods of silence with deep reflection, their willing verbal contributions, their attentiveness, and their joyful communal singing. They recognise how prayerful reflection gives them a chance to feel close to God: 'In meditation prayers, I can picture him in my mind' and 'I know that God will always love me' are typical comments prompted by pupils discussing their prayer experiences. Pupils understand the wide variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. Their confidence in taking up roles in ministry is very successfully embedded, with all recognised elements included and an impressive independence in planning from an early age. They are able to select scripture, write prayers, organise settings and proclaim the Gospel with knowledge of its meaning, which they skilfully link to a suitable mission to take forward into each day. Their development of creative elements within the structure of celebrations of the word is excellent, with the use of liturgical dance a particular strength. Older pupils are confident in ministering to younger pupils and in a whole-school setting. Their skills of evaluation are conscious and deep. Pupils demonstrate that they are ready to embrace further opportunities. Their experiences have a significant impact on how they think about themselves and put their faith into action.

Prayer and liturgy are a central aspect of the life of the school. The rhythm of prayer is threaded through each day; the weekly pattern encompasses morning prayers, the mission for the week, singing prayer, meditative and celebration of the word. Scripture is well chosen, related to the seasons of the Church's year, or linked to topics being studied in religious

education. Teachers all have opportunities to plan and lead prayer within the class and to the whole school. The headteacher's knowledge of the liturgical norms of the Church have been effectively disseminated to staff and pupils, particularly through the Friday Faith formation for example. Creative and artistic skills of staff and pupils have been encouraged and identified to enhance experiences. There is good use of space, including the dedicated prayer garden, a foundation stage area, re-arranged classrooms and the hall, as well as visits to St Edward's Church. Families are encouraged to share in the prayer life of the school, as part of a flourishing partnership with the parish and the home, including through the regular newsletter.

The Prayer and Liturgy policy has recently been revised in line with *'To love you more dearly, (the Prayer and Liturgy Directory 2023)*. Therefore, its impact and usefulness for staff is not yet able to be evaluated. Guidelines for the progression of pupil skills have been in place for longer, and are well understood, by both staff and pupils. There has not yet been an opportunity to merge these documents to form one comprehensive strategy that will meet the needs of pupils and staff. The headteacher and governors understand that pupils develop a good understanding and confident capability in the planning and ministry of prayer and liturgy ahead of that expected in many schools. They recognise the potential of older pupils to go beyond diocesan expectations in this regard. The Annual Plan of Provision ensures that all significant feasts and holydays are celebrated appropriately. Continuing professional development is regular and has been viewed by staff as being very helpful. Relevant staff are used as 'faith mentors' to assist those less confident. Self-evaluation of collective worship is regular and thorough, including the voices of pupils and governors, leading to ongoing improvements.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Edward's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	108012
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3833358
Full postal address of the school	Westwood Way, Boston Spa, Wetherby, LS23 6DL
School phone number	01937 843946
Headteacher or Head of School	Miss Anne Gilpin
Chair of Governors	Dr Davina Polcaro
School Website	www.st-edwards.leeds.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	29 March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Alan Dewhurst Lead

Claire Cade

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement